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SUBJECT: CIVAIR - Fonoff Reaction to Washington Talks

REF: Rome 547

1. Department appreciates excellent report on conversion with Serafini, and positions taken by Embassy in attempting to keep record straight. We believe the Italians convinced themselves that USG would be overly anxious to achieve early introduction 747 service to Rome. FYI There is speculation here in industry circles that Italian position paper was calculated to upset bilateral progress just enough to keep Panam and TWA 747's out of Rome until Alitalia receives equipment this summer. Embassy views would be appreciated. END FYI

2. Serafini's presentation of the Washington talks was seriously distorted. It might useful for Emboff to go over material with him again, concentrating on correcting these specific misunderstandings:

FNT

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a. USDel at no time requested, much less insisted on, prior written agreement by Italians to accept 747 as condition precedent to negotiations. As Emboff pointed out, we did discuss other matters without any agreement on 747.

b. Our consideration of Italian paper hardly pro-forma. After our initial discussion of deficiencies and regressiveness of Italian paper, Santini replied following day by reaffirming all points as traditional Italian position and indicating no possible give.

c. Serafini's belief that US abruptly adjourned talks is serious misinterpretation of what happened. In fact, USDel responded to Santini's reiteration of Italian tough line by saying that [redacted] it was difficult to see what further progress we could make in these discussions under those circumstances. Santini agreed immediately that there seemed to be no further purpose in talking, and

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the adjournment was by mutual agreement. Santini did not indicate at any time then or during subsequent luncheon meeting at the Italian Embassy, that he was disappointed or would like to resume in the afternoon or the next day.

3. Regarding Serafini's belief that we are experiencing difficulty introducing 747's into other countries, ~~Embassy~~ Emboff was correct in noting that service has already begun to London. While British have indicated concern over future US-UK capacity problems, no restrictions have been placed on 747's by UK. Introduction into France and Germany has raised no questions whatsoever ~~in~~ from those governments. In fact, Italy is the only country that has specifically raised any question about 747 capacity and Embassy may note that 747's will be introduced this summer into Portugal and Spain as well as many other countries.

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4. Embassy attitude should reflect more sorrow than anger, and convey our conviction that US was not unreasonable. On the contrary, we were perplexed at Italian negotiating tactic, if we can take Serafini's word on this, of throwing away a year and a half of discussions in order to establish a starting point for these talks.

5. So far as the "informality" of the talks in Washington, USDel was reduced from last time around in deference Italian feelings, and in fact barely outnumbered five-man Italian Del.

[ROGERS]

END

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